

Message Text

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ACTION OFA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-09 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 AF-06

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ERDE-00 ACDA-10 AGR-10

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00

DLOS-04 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FEAE-00

FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02 OES-05 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OIC-02 /168 W
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FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6762

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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COMDT COGARD WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS MONTREAL 1583

FROM US DEL ICNAF

DEPT FOR UNDERSECRETARY MAW AND OES/OFA

COPENHAGEN, MEXICO AND CASABLANCA FOR FISHATT

REF: STATE 225088

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS ICNAF OCON XN

SUBJ: ICNAF SPECIAL MEETING MONTREAL

1. TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE BY US DEL AT END OF ICNAF MEETING
SEPT. 28 FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE MONTREAL, SEPT. 28: SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT WAS REACHED SUNDAY ON ALL MAJOR UNITED STATES PROPOSALS BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES (ICNAF). THE SEVENTH SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION CONCLUDED SUNDAY AFTER A WEEK OF DELIBERATIONS WHICH WERE CHARACTERIZED AS SOME OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN THE COMMISSION'S 25-YEAR HISTORY BY DAVID H. WALLACE, CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S. DELEGATION.

THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE 17 MEMBER NATION BODY WHICH DEALS WITH THE CONSERVATION OF FISH STOCKS IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC WAS CALLED AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S. AND CANADA TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING ISSUES ON THE REDUCTION OF FISHING EFFORT AND QUOTAS IN THE CONVENTION AREA WHICH HAD NOT BEEN SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION IN JUNE.

THE COMMISSION TOOK POSITIVE ACTION ON U.S. PROPOSALS FOR A REDUCED 1976 OVERALL CATCH QUOTA FOR THE ENTIRE FISH BIOMASS OFF THE UNITED STATES COAST, A CLOSURE OF MOST OF THE GEORGES BANK AREA TO VESSELS CAPABLE OF CATCHING VALUABLE AND DEPLETED GROUND-FISH SPECIES, A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF VESSEL REGISTRATION, AND MORE RESTRICTIVE AND ENFORCEABLE EXEMPTION PROVISIONS FOR TRAWL NET FISHERIES CONDUCTED OFF THE U.S. AND CANADIAN COASTS.

OPENING CEREMONIES AT THE START OF THE SPECIAL MEETING ON SEPT. 22, INCLUDED AN ADDRESS BY U.S. UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE,
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CARLYLE E. MAW WHO BROUGHT WITH HIM A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE COMMISSION STRESSED THE GREAT IMPORTANCE WHICH THE UNITED STATES ATTACHES TO EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION MEASURES, EFFICIENT ENFORCEMENT OF THOSE MEASURES AND THE PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE OF A SUCCESSFUL ICNAF MEETING AT THIS CRITICAL TIME.

A PRINCIPAL U.S. OBJECTIVE AT THE MONTREAL MEETING WAS TO OBTAIN A 1976 OVERALL FISHING QUOTA FOR THE AREA OFF THE U.S. COAST WHICH WOULD ALLOW A RAPID RECOVERY OF THE DEPLETED BIOMASS. THIS "SECOND TIER QUOTA" IS ALLOCATED NATIONALLY TO LIMIT WHAT

EACH NATION CAN HARVEST FROM THE BIOMASS AS A WHOLE. IT IS IMPOSED AS A CEILING FIGURE OVER THE INDIVIDUAL SPECIES QUOTAS AND IS LESS THAN THE SUM OF THE INDIVIDUAL SPECIES QUOTAS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHING METHODS WHICH CONCENTRATE ON THE TARGET SPECIES AND REDUCE THE BY-CATCH OF OTHER SPECIES. THE SECOND TIER SYSTEM WAS FIRST APPROVED IN 1973 FOR APPLICATION IN THE 1974 FISHING SEASON IN AN EFFORT TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE OVER-ALL FOREIGN CATCHES OFF THE U.S. COAST. SECOND TIER QUOTA LEVELS ESTABLISHED FOR 1974 AND 75 WERE DESIGNED TO STABILIZE THE BIOMASS AND THE COMMISSION HAD AGREED THAT THE 1976 LEVEL WOULD BE SET AT AN AMOUNT WHICH WOULD ALLOW RECOVERY OF THE BIOMASS TO THE MAXIMUM SUSTAINABLE YIELD LEVEL. THE JUNE ANNUAL MEETING HAD AGREED TO WHAT THE UNITED STATES REGARDED AS AN EXCESSIVE LEVEL OF 724,000 METRIC TONS BY EXCLUDING SQUIDS FROM THE REGULATION. THIS HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE IN EITHER 1974 OR 75. SCIENTISTS ESTIMATED THAT AT SUCH A LEVEL AT LEAST A FULL DECADE WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR STOCK RECOVERY. THE UNITED STATES REGARDED THIS AS UNACCEPTABLE AND FILED A FORMAL OBJECTION TO THE REGULATION UNDER THE RULES OF THE COMMISSION. AS A RESULT OF THIS WEEK'S MEETING, THE COMMISSION HAS AGREED TO SET THE 1976 LEVEL AT 650,000 METRIC TONS INCLUDING SQUIDS. THIS LEVEL SHOULD PROVIDE A HIGH PROBABILITY OF RECOVERY WITHIN SEVEN YEARS, ACCORDING TO U.S. FISHERIES SCIENTISTS.

NO ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN AT THE JUNE MEETING ON A U.S. PROPOSAL TO LIMIT BY-CATCHES OF VALUABLE AND SERIOUSLY DEPLETED YELLOWTAIL FLOUNDER AND HADDOCK STOCKS ON GEORGES BANK THROUGH CLOSURE OF THIS AREA TO VESSELS USING GEAR CAPABLE OF CATCHING THESE GROUND FISH. ARGUMENTS HAD BEEN RAISED BY OTHERS THAT SUCH A REGULATION WOULD SERIOUSLY INTERFERE WITH FISHERIES FOR SPECIES SUCH AS COD AND THE HAKES. AT THE MONTREAL MEETING, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON A REGULATION CLOSING A LARGE AREA ON GEORGES BANK

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TO SUCH VESSELS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THOUGH SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN THE AREA ORIGINALLY PROPOSED FOR CLOSURE BY THE U.S., THE AREA IS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE TO PROVIDE SATISFACTORY PROTECTION FOR THESE IMPORTANT STOCKS.

FURTHER PROGRESS IN THE CRITICAL AREA OF IMPROVED INTERNATIONAL ENFORCEMENT WAS ALSO A PRINCIPAL U.S. OBJECTIVE AT THE SPECIAL MEETING. THIS WAS ACHIEVED TO A SIGNIFICANT EXTENT WITH THE APPROVAL OF A U.S.- PROPOSED SYSTEM OF NATIONAL REGISTRATION FOR VESSELS ENGAGED IN FISHING OR FISH PROCESSING IN THE CONVENTION AREA. SUCH A SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST MEMBER GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL IN MONITORING FISHING EFFORT DEPLOYED THROUGHOUT THE AREA.

U.S. EFFORTS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN JUNE TO SECURE APPROVAL OF SUCH A SYSTEM HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. ADDITIONAL PROGRESS IN THIS AREA AS WELL AS ADDED CONTROL OVER BY-CATCHES OF REGULATED SPECIES WAS ACHIEVED WITH THE APPROVAL OF A MORE RESTRICTIVE AND MORE EASILY ENFORCEABLE EXEMPTION FOR TRAWL NET FISHERIES CONDUCTED OFF BOTH THE U.S. AND CANADIAN COASTS.

CANADA WAS SUCCESSFUL IN SECURING APPROVAL FOR A REGULATION DESIGNED TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE FISHING EFFORT ON GROUND FISH STOCKS IN FIVE PORTIONS OF THE CONVENTION AREA OFF THE CANADIAN COAST. THE REGULATION PROVIDES FOR REDUCTION IN FISHING DAYS FOR VARIOUS FISHING VESSEL TONNAGE AND GEAR CATEGORIES RANGING FROM 40 TO 50 PERCENT FROM THAT REPORTED IN THE 1972 AND 1973 PERIODS.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED WITH AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE OBSERVER FROM CUBA THAT ACTION REQUIRED FOR CUBA TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY INITIATED BY HIS GOVERNMENT. THE COMMISSION HAD APPROVED ADJUSTMENTS IN QUOTA ALLOCATIONS FOR A NUMBER OF STOCKS PROVIDING THE SPECIFIED CATCH ALLOCATIONS NECESSARY FOR CUBA TO FISH WITHIN ESTABLISHED CONSERVATION REGULATIONS THROUGHOUT 1976.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION WILL BE HELD IN ROME, ITALY, IN JANUARY 1976. THE MEETING HAS BEEN CALLED TO ESTABLISH QUOTAS FOR A NUMBER OF NORTHWEST ATLANTIC HERRING STOCKS FISHED OFF BOTH THE U.S. AND CANADIAN COASTS. ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS ON ENFORCEMENT, MADE BY THE UNITED STATES WILL ALSO BE ON THE AGENDA.
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